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PARENTS NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNION

MINUTES OF THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN Mr. Richards, Board of Education
Mr. Oppe, Board of Education,
(Training College)
Dr. Costley-White
Hon. Mrs. Franklin

September 30, 1926.

In answer to Mrs. Franklin's request for an interview, Mr. Oppe wrote (23rd July) "the obstacles to recognition have never been so insuperable that it would not be a good thing for you to come as you suggest to talk over the whole position in the autumn. If you would suggest a date late in September I hope that it will be possible for Mr. Richards, our Chief Inspector, to be present."

Sept. 30. Mrs. Franklin and Dr. Costley-White were most sympathetic received, and Mr. Richards distinctly said that he wanted very much to make it possible for the College to be recognised, in view of the great demand that there was for its students, especially in small village schools where two teachers lived together and received a salary of about £600 a year with a house, and where there hope was that all classes of children living in the village would attend.

Mrs. Franklin pointed out that the desire for the recognition of the College came from ex-students who were anxious partly in a missionary spirit to help in spreading Charlotte Mason's principles and methods in the Council Schools or public elementary and secondary schools of this country and the Dominions.

Mr. Richards pointed out that there seemed to be three "hurdles" to be crossed, - and he would very much like to help us to cross them - namely,

1. Entrance examination: Mrs. Franklin showed the questions on the specimen entrance examination papers sent by Miss Parish, and Mr. Oppe and Mr. Richards said that the standard seemed to be that required by them, namely, as equal to the First School Certificate, - so that that "hurdle" seemed to be crossed.
2. Practice: Mr. Richards said it was essential that teachers wishing to teach in government schools should have had at least three ^{in addition to their practice in the practicing School} weeks practice with large classes, so that it could be affirmed that the teacher was able to handle such large classes. Mr. Richards suggested that arrangements might be made with the school at Windermere and schools in neighbouring places for the College students to go there for such practice. He thought that the fact that such schools might not be schools 'converted' to P. N. E. U. was no insuperable difficulty. He saw no objection & nor did Dr. Costley-White - even to students teaching in the methods of the school, just in order to learn how to handle large classes. "Hurdle" number 2, therefore, did not appear unsurmountable.
3. Final Examination: The regulations for this, it appears, are more or less in process of redrafting, the attempt being made by the Board of Education to hand over the responsibility of such examinations to the Universities, the examination being based on the work of the colleges. Mr. Oppe said that this was not yet carried through, there being many difficulties in regard to it.

3.

Mr. Richards was of the opinion that there might always be a few exceptional cases such as training colleges for nursery schools, and he did not think it quite impossible that training colleges for P.N.E.U. methods might remain such exceptions.

Together with this final examination there would always run inspection by the Board, say once a year, or once in two or three years. He quite strongly recommended that as a preliminary to recognition, the Ambleside Council, through its Principal should at once apply formally for such inspection as a " preliminary to possible recognition" . Both gentlemen seemed to feel that after such an inspection it might be possible to approach Professor Campagnac of the Liverpool University - that being a northern University- to do all that was necessary so that the final examination of the college could be conducted under the authority of the University , thus satisfying the requirements of the Board. But whether this was so or not, the Board evidently was of the opinion that such a preliminary inspection (quite a different thing from examination) should be carried out.

Mrs. Franklin and Dr. Costley-White left the Board with the strong feeling that the Board were not only willing but desirous to have the College in, and that if it came in it would be on the merits of its work, and that there would be no attempt on the part of the Board either to stereotype or to alter the Ambleside methods.
